AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (Currently Amended):   A method of leaching a metal value from a heap of a metal-containing ore, which method includes the ~~steps~~ step of:

(a)   ~~establishing a downward flow of a leach liquor through a section of the heap by~~ supplying ~~the~~ a leach liquor onto a top surface of ~~the~~ a section of a heap length and allowing the leach liquor (containing metal values in solution) to drain from a lower part of the section, with the leach liquor being supplied for a relatively short time period of less than 4 hours per 24 hour period and ~~(b) supplying the leach liquor onto the top surface of the section~~ at a flow rate that is sufficient so that the downwardly flowing leach liquor saturates the section of the heap while the leach liquor flows through the section of the heap.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended):   The method defined in claim 1 ~~wherein step (a)~~ which further includes ~~establishing a plug flow of the leach liquor through the section of the heap and step (b) includes~~ supplying the leach liquor at a flow rate that establishes and maintains the plug flow of the leach liquor and maintains saturation of the section of the heap while the leach liquor flows through the section of the heap.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended):   The method defined in claim 2 which further includes supplying the leach liquor ~~in step (b) by supplying the leach liquor~~ as a downwardly flowing curtain that contacts the top surface of the heap as a line or a narrow band that extends across the top surface and moving the curtain along the length of the section of the heap or the entire length of the heap continuously or in a series of steps.

Claim 4 (Original):   The method defined in claim 3 wherein the curtain is continuous across the top surface of the heap.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended):   The method defined in claim 1 further including supplying the leach liquor ~~in step (b)~~ at a flow rate that is greater than 15 l/hr/m^2 of

the top surface of the section.

Claim 6 (Original):   The method defined in claim 5 wherein the flow rate is greater than 20 l/hr/m^2 of the top surface of the section.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented):   The method defined in claim 6 wherein the flow rate is greater than 25 l/hr/m^2 of the top surface of the section.

Claims 8-9 (Cancelled).

Claim 10 (Currently Amended):   The method defined in claim ~~8~~ 1 wherein the time period is less than 3 hours per 24 hour period.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended):   The method defined in claim ~~8~~ 1 wherein the time period is less than 2 hours per 24 hour period.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended):   The method defined in claim 1 further including supplying the leach liquor ~~in step (b)~~ via a distributor that can be moved over the surface of the heap.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended):   The method defined in claim 1 further including retaining and minimising run-off of the leach liquor supplied onto the top surface ~~in step (b)~~ by positioning a barrier on the top surface of the heap.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended):   The method defined in claim 1 further including retaining and minimising run-off of the leach liquor supplied onto the top surface ~~in step (b)~~ by forming a series of furrows or other suitable troughs for leach liquor, and ~~wherein step (b) includes~~ supplying the leach liquor into the furrows.

Claims 15-20 (Cancelled).

Claim 21 (Currently Amended)   A method of leaching a metal value from a heap of a metal-containing ore, which method includes the steps of:

(a)   ~~establishing a downward flow of a leach liquor through a section of the heap by~~ supplying ~~the~~ a leach liquor onto a top surface of ~~the~~ a section of a length of the heap and allowing the leach liquor (containing metal values in solution) to drain from a lower part of the section; with the leach liquor being supplied for a relatively short time period of less than 4 hours per 24 hours ~~(b) supplying the leach liquor~~ as a downwardly flowing curtain that contacts the top surface of the heap as a line or a narrow band of less than 1 m wide that extends across the top surface at a flow rate that is sufficient so that the downwardly flowing leach liquor saturates the section of the heap while the leach liquor flows through the section of the heap, ~~wherein the line or narrow band is less than 1 m wide~~; and

~~(c)~~(b)   moving the curtain along the length of the section of the heap or the entire length of the heap continuously or in a series of steps.